Ideological Effects in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Toni Morrison's *Beloved*

Izumi Koizumi

But it wasn't the jungle blacks brought with them to this place from the other (livable) place. It was the jungle whitefolks planted in them. (Toni Morrison, *Beloved* 198)

In the relation between literary text and social world, about which Marxism attempts to draw conclusions, ideology is necessarily conceived. Conceiving ideology as the central feature of his own Marxist theory, one of the most influential Marxist literary critics, Louis Althusser, maintains that there is no real contradiction between capital (ruling class) and labor (working class) as domination and submission. According to Althusser, ideology is illusion/allusion (110): "ideology is a 'representation' of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence" (109). With socially and historically complex relationships, then, literature in a way reflects an ideological form, the production of a certain reality and social effects: the very production of the literary text represents the ideological effects. Toni Morrison's statement that "Canon Building is Empire Building" ("Unspeakable" 207) aptly points out the ideological effects of the social or communal structure on literature, for, as Etienne Balibar and Pierre Macherey point out, the work of literary production depends on the existence of a common language, that is, usually, a national language, which is politically and historically the outcome and manifestation of particular class struggles, of "bourgeois democracy" as the dominant ideology, providing appropriate fictional effects (6); thus the work of literary production becomes a site of ideological effects. In this Machereyan perspective, the literary text embodies (ideological) structures that permeates each society, materially inscribed in that constitution and system. The literary text is hence the agent for reproducing the same ideology: the dominant or privileged where the ruling ideology is realized and inferiority is confirmed for the dominated within the dominant ideology itself. Here appears an obvious dynamic: insofar as each individual identifies him- or herself as "subject" and functions as such in his/her constitution and recognition, the ideological effects are effects of domination, where individuals are subjected to the dominant ideology of the ruling class. There is a mutual recognition between subjects and Subject, where subjects will subject themselves to the system by accepting their positions or conditions and where they are willing hands of labor: that is the very thing capitalism requires in the area ideology works. With this dynamic, the ideological

components — an idealized version of commonplace bourgeois individualism and the opposing imperatives in the reified society it produces — are strongly marked in the texts of Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison even though their delineations are very different. In this paper, I will explore and compare how Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and Morrison's *Beloved* exhibit the effects that ideology exerts and (re)produces, and how each writer responds to the social ideology of her respective capitalist epoch.

I

It is said that what was lacking in the South between 1880 and 1920 was a vibrant critical spirit, precisely what had been lacking in the antebellum South. Zora Neale Hurston, born in 1891, wrote as a Southern woman writer several works of fiction and nonfiction in the 1930s and 40s, including a remarkable novel in 1937: *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. It was a time when the critical spirit was just rising in the South, to attack southern social, racial, and intellectual inadequacies, and a time when the Southern Renascence, with both its new bold spirit and a vigorous defense of the traditional South similar to that of the Agrarians, presented the greatest outbursts of literary excellence. The new ideology was just beginning to appear in the works of southern writers, including not only the criticism of southern race relations but also a challenge to traditional gender roles.

With this literary and social background, Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* appeared in 1937. Critics mostly have focused on the feminist discussion of whether the protagonist, Janie Crawford, is able to overcome the limitations of her status as an African American woman, developing in exclusion from ideologies or languages that assume a binary and hierarchical model of reality; and those critics celebrate a woman coming to self-discovery with her own voice. Dying in1960 in a country poorhouse, buried in an unmarked grave in a racially segregated cemetery, Hurston was resurrected in the 1970s by the women's movement. In Hurston's work, the narrative voice — its language — serves as a critical device comparable to feminist theories of narrative. Filling her novel with effective representations of narration, of the act of narrating, Hurston demonstrates, to borrow the words of Margaret Homans, "a history of gendered meanings" that prove their persistent cultural power in sociological and political terms as well as in the art of fictional folklorist narrative (4); and further attempts to provide an alternative structure of voice, namely, a force excluded from ideologies or languages that assume a binary and hierarchical model of reality. Culture and narrative being closely interconnected, Jürgen C. Wolter argues that *Their Eyes* exhibits two cultural principles and the dualism on many levels, including narrative technique; the frameworks of the linearity of the literate tradition as Western/white/male and the circularity of orality as African/black/female. In *Their Eyes*, therefore, when/if Janie really can achieve, or at least liberates the possibilities of, her own narrative, the novel demonstrates the African American circularity that Hurston privileges; moreover, she represents the Marxist view of history in the ideological class/gender discrimination naturally related to the social structure of

reality. What Hurston is interested in foregrounding in the text is, then, not the paradigms of white/black culture clash in racial conflict, but rather, the ideologically—socially and politically—prevailing power structure which reflects the traditional roles of women in that era.

Discussing "historicism" in his recent book, *The Shape of the Signifier*, Walther Benn Michaels asserts that if "historicism involves what are by now familiar commitments to cultural identity and cultural heritage, and to events that are experienced and transmitted rather than represented and known, the antihistoricism turns out to involve a commitment to classes rather than cultures and to a simultaneously demonized and eroticized version both of liberal capitalism and of the principle—freedom of contract—that animates it" (16). *Their Eyes*, then, might be called an antihistoricist novel to the extent of the class consciousness that Michaels indicates. In other words, as Michaels puts it, " . . . class difference is ineluctably linked to inequality, where cultural difference, of course, is not. Cultures, in theory if not always in practice, are equal; classes, in theory and in practice, are not" (17). With the female protagonist Janie, who tells the story of her three consecutive marriages, Hurston commits to the class/gender—power— discrimination, where she represents the antihistoric ideology in the structure, signifying the conflicting ideological positions of *Their Eyes*.

Janie's successive marriages, each of which brings about not merely a change in setting but a new phase in the story of her life, can be classified into two categories: to borrow the words of Donald Marks, "the organicist ideology of romantic pastoralism" and "the mechanistic one of bourgeois capitalism" (152). Supporting the class distinctions of bourgeois capitalism, Janie's first two marriages illustrate the mechanistic category, a place of authoritative power and respect. Both Logan Killicks and Joe Starks embody "authority" in their ability to exercise power, involving sexual exploitation, while Janie seems to receive their violence (violent love) as a socially acceptable expression of authority. Even though by virtue of labor as a proletarian, Killicks is now a propertied man who has achieved material success, and who can ensure financial security. For this security or "protection," Nanny has chosen Killicks to be Janie's husband, hoping that he will not subjugate Janie as she herself was subjugated; however, he compels Janie to work by his side—she is a symbolic "gentle mule." Likewise, as a spokesperson for Hurston, Joe Starks is the text's figure of authority and voice, indeed "the authority *of* voice" (Gates 206). In fact, Starks becomes the unquestioned leader of Eatonville, aiming "tuh be uh big voice" although it is indicated in the text that he has had a difficult life filled with labor (46). Janie, now "the wife of the Mayor," observes:

> She slept with authority and so she was part of it in the town mind. She couldn't get but so close to most of them in spirit. It was especially noticeable after Joe had forced through a town ditch to drain the street in front of the store. They had murmured hotly about slavery being over, but every man filled his assignment.

The narrator also discribes how he assumes the authority of a white person:

> Take for instance that new house of his. It had two stories with porches, with banis-

> ters and such things. The rest of the town looked like servants' quarters surrounding the "big house." And different from everybody else in the town he put off moving in until it had been painted, in and out. And look at the way he painted it—a gloaty, sparkly white. (46-7)

Joe Starks's authority replicates the one by which whites have oppressed African Americans, and is an implicit criticism of the oppressive and economically unbalanced structure imposed by white society. Symbolically, in the comparable condition of mules and African American women,[1] Nanny's statement to Janie indicates not merely a collective past racially speaking and the role of the African American in the white-black relationship, but rather, more pointedly, disapproval of the class/gender discrimination inflicted by the ideology: "de white man throw down de load and tell de nigger man tuh pick it up. He pick it up because he have to, but he don't tote it. He hand it to his womenfolks. De nigger woman is de mule uh de world so fur as Ah can see" (14). In Cheryl Wall's view, Starks borrows his "criteria for success from the white world of the Southern aristocrat, which considered an idle, helpless woman as the ultimate complement to the financially successful man's social status" (qtd. in Awkward 37). Being Janie's class-conscious mentors and oppressors, and insisting on the submission of Janie (and also the townspeople, in the case of Starks), Killicks, Starks, and Nanny's words embody the ideology that represents the white male codes of individual success and social hierarchy—the dominant culture's way of thinking. As seen in Janie's relationships with the men here, the power structure both Killicks and Starks designate recalls the words of Maria Stewart, a nineteenth-century political activist who, protesting against racial inequality, said, "We have pursued the shadow, they have obtained the substance: we have performed the labor, they have received the profits; we have planted the vines, they have eaten the fruits of them" (qtd. in Collins 3). Hurston does not place emphasis on protesting against racial inequality, but the words are true to and reflect these men's class-conscious elitism and their capitalist ambition, with the authoritative figures accumulating wealth and power.

In contrast to the mechanistic ideology that is, as we have seen above, represented by Killicks and Starks, the essentially organicist vision of society is signified by Janie's third husband Tea Cake and by his community "on the 'Glades," which seems to retain a high degree of autonomy and to be free of the legislative power structures characteristic of a mechanistic society. Although some critics such as Ryan Simmons suggest that Tea Cake in fact cannot be "an emblem of Janie's liberation" (188),[2] Tea Cake's organic community is no doubt what Hurston idealistically considers the most viable option for removal of the "exploitation" and "alienation" characteristic of capitalism; even though the community "on the 'Glades" could be seen, more or less, within the essentially hierarchically ordered social system, that is, the feudalistic landowner-tenant laborer system, in a function of Tea Cake's class identification. Living with Tea Cake "on the 'Glades," and being allowed greater freedom than with Starks, Janie at least achieves the greatest degree of satisfaction: she is not concerned with emulating the social mechanisms of a capitalistic society, and both Tea Cake and Janie are almost immune to external manifestations of power, money, and position.

Tea Cake's immunity truly prevents him from classifying Janie off. Thus, in the text of *Their Eyes*, Hurston endorses the organicist ideology of romantic pastoralism, showing respect for the non-mechanistic, non-technological vision of social order and acknowledging the destructiveness of capitalist ideology, and that the cost of traditional authority is too great.

In its commitment to class ideology, Hurston's *Their Eyes* is apparently a novel of antihistoricism. But Hurston is by no means an anti-*historicist* because she does not deny or refuse the past. Hurston, like Leslie Marmon Silko's Marxist,[3] keeps on insisting on the racial pride and primacy of the class struggle, depicting in the pure black community capitalist exploitation that steals the worker's labor. With a narrative formation Hurston herself contrives, *Their Eyes* is in the first place a novel that depicts the world of African American folklore, a world that is filled with the richness of the black folk experience; it is much more than just a protest novel showing victims of white racial prejudice. Asserting that "the Negro is still an African" (qtd. in Ryan 273), Hurston underscores the historical context of revalidation and the necessity for it in the text, as shown by Janie's observation: "Nanny's head and face looked like the standing roots of some old tree that had been torn away by storm. Foundation of ancient power that no longer mattered. The cooling palma christi leaves that Janie had bound about her grandma's head with a white rag had wilted down and become part and parcel of the woman" (12). Here Janie certainly acknowledges the (ideological) assault to which their cultural tradition has been subjected, while she does not deny the reality of the "ancient power" at all; rather, she tries to revalidate and reclaim the ancient identities, kinships, and responsibility—"the past." To withstand a further continuing assault, Hurston proposes the necessary encounter with or reaccess to the past, like, in this sense, the "historicist," Toni Morrison.

II

Toni Morrison's *Beloved* appeared in 1989, more than a century after slavery ended and about thirty years after the Civil Right Movement, that is, when racial struggle had activated. Reflecting this social conditions, the novel *Beloved* is an antislavery novel of Toni Morrison, a "historicist" as Michael indicates, who appeals to—but not against—history. In her essay "Unspeakable things Unspoken," Morrison expresses that African-Americans discovered that "they had shaped or become a culturally formed race" (203); and, appropriately taking up Herman Melville's *Moby-Dick*, says that "the canon of American literature is 'naturally' or 'inevitably' 'white,'" which is "a great, ornamental, prescribed absence in early American literature" (212). What Morrison suggests in Melville is that that idea is "the successful assertion of whiteness as ideology," an exploration of "whiteness idealized"—not white people—in the dominant consciousness of his time (214-5). Although Morrison tells in an interview that *Beloved* is "something that the characters don't want to remember, I don't want to remember, black people don't want to remember, white people won't want to remember" (Angelo 257), She, to "appeal to history," highlights the danger of assimilating dominant American cultural values—white, male, bourgeois ideology—in the racially power

structure, a context of oppression and exploitation (131). Blackness might, in a sense, have been constructed as the Other which supports the white cultural ideology, but it is no doubt that the values of white bourgeois consumer culture have engendered physically and psychologically "hunger," specifically hunger for "property," on the Other. To withstand "the danger," Morrison makes *Beloved* a "historical" novel in that it's about the historical past; and also a "historicist" novel in that, in the words of Michaels, "setting out to remember 'disremembered'—it redescribes something we have never known as something we have forgotten and thus makes the historical past a part of our own experience" (137). We are then forced to experience the effects of ideology on the oppressed past—exploitation and alienation, in Morrison's words, "proceedings too terrible to relate" ("Site" 191). *Beloved* becomes a novel of (racialized) historicism, exposing the trauma of "sixty million and more" described in/by *Beloved*/Beloved as a literary testimony.

Toni Morrison has exposed, more or less, the traumatic experience of social powerlessness and devalued racial identity for African American people from her first novel, *The Bluest Eye* (1970), in which the protagonist Pecola epitomizes the victim in a world that makes them feel degraded and inferior as "objects" with no way to oppose dominant forces in the society. Likewise, in *Beloved*, Morrison depicts an imposing/imposed upon white/black culture, in which she, for people who are living now,[4] racially challenges (from the standpoint of at least the dominant stream of Marxism) a capitalistic social structure in that capitalism is understood to need the poor and expects, as Michaels states, that "the end of capitalism is supposed to be the end of poverty—or, at least, the end of the difference between the poor and the rich" (180). Thus, Morrison fights for private "property," the first of which is identity, as well as appeals to history, that is, fights to shape a history that gives her people their identity.

According to Michaels, it is racial identity that makes the experience of enslavement part of the history of African-Americans today (136). In the relation between past/memory and present/identity, Michaels also mentions Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s idea that "as an individual deprived of memory becomes disoriented and lost, . . . so a nation denied a conception of its past will be disabled in dealing with its present. . . . As the means of defining national identity, history becomes a means of shaping history" (qtd. in Michaels 133). In *Beloved*, a ghost figure appears as Morrison's device to deal with the present, symbolizing Sethe's strong link with the past, because only "memory" does not sufficiently demonstrate the relationship between past and present. Critics have interpreted the ghostly incarnated presence of Beloved as one who serves as "the forgotten spirit of the past that must 'be loved'" (Krumholz 95), or who conveys "the power of trauma to possess and trap its victims" and expresses "the humiliated fury of the trauma victim and also despair" (Mobley 134, 149). In short, *Beloved* is the story of the past embodied. Haunting the mother in the form of the ghost of her dead daughter, in fact, Beloved's reincarnation corresponds to the return of many of Sethe's painful repressed memories of her enslaved past, of what she has not yet resolved or accepted since she desires to forget or "disremember" the past. The ghost's unpredictable intrusion on the present forces the characters—not only Sethe but also Paul D and Denver—unsuc-

cessfully to forget the power of the past, which the dead child coaxes the mother into telling.

The incarnated Beloved is, in this way, a figure who embodies the effort to make the past haunt the present, importantly transforming history into something that can be remembered, that is, a process to history itself. Emerging from the grave, from the repressed past, Beloved's ghostly presence is an embodiment of the parallels between a spirit searching for a body in the present and a child desiring a merger with her mother as a mirror of her own present existence: "I need to find a place to be . . . I am not dead" (213). Craving her mother's face, Beloved in her unpunctuated monologues describes the entangled past and present: "I AM BELOVED and she is mine. . . . I am not separate from her there is no place where I stop her face is my own and I want to be there in the place where her face is and to be looking at it too a hot thing" (210). Beloved/*Beloved* is hence not simply a place of the dead, but a place where the people who are living now recollect and *experience* their past in the sense that it makes the historical past a part of our own experience, intimately connecting their past and present; it is also an observation of the "interior life" of the African American psyche.

Caroline Rody interprets the haunting and resurrection of the beloved ghost as serving as the inscription of Sethe's/Morrison's haunted *negotiations* with her people's past (98). Stamp Paid, arriving at 124 Bluestone Road, incomprehensibly hears "a conflagration of hasty voices," which he cannot clearly understand; he only hears the word *mine* (172). What Morrison intends here is to speak with the dead or recreate a dialogue or conversation with them. According to Michaels, the ghost story in which the dead speak is "the privileged form of the new historicism" (137). Where a "link" with the dead is achieved, the New Historicism requires a heightened continuity, and discovers that "what one hears when one hears the dead speak is actually the sound of one's 'own voice'" (138). This discovery makes the link — the historical continuity — stronger, and this link shapes identity, like the identity of Beloved, the ghost spirit of the past invading the present as both "the join" and a confusion of past and present.

In Morrison's history, "rememory"[5] postulates the interconnectedness of the minds of past and present, as in "the two of us" between Sethe and Beloved (213), realizing "the heightened continuity," a latent, abiding connection to the past. Offering a transformative space, Morrison converts history into "rememory" by which she attempts to protect her people, her ancestors, who are if not remembered, forgotten, that is, to protect the individual and racial or national identity of her own people. Morrison then succeeds in establishing remembering or forgetting as the relevant alternatives in *Beloved*, preventing herself from committing a "crime against history," that is "the worst crime of all."[6]

In this way, Morrison's "Death" or the ghost figure not so much interrupts as makes intimate kinship and communication between the living and their ancestors. Morrison also employs as a way to "appeal to history" aspects of African traditional spirituality[7] as exemplified in the preaching of Baby Suggs, since spirituality enables the characters to withstand ideological assaults and develop their own sustaining ideologies. Baby Suggs is the spiritual center, the moral backbone, of

Beloved; she exercises a spiritual leadership that gives critical insight into African American authority and autonomy, for Africans relocated in the "New World" via the slave trade faced the imposition of a new cultural or spiritual subjectivity and a loss of identity. Arriving in Cincinnati after a lifetime of enslavement, Baby Suggs is convinced that, "because slave life had 'busted her legs, back, head, eyes, hands, kidneys, womb and tongue,' she had nothing left to make a living with but her heart" (87). As "an unchurched preacher," she then *revisits*, not refuses, history—slavery—so that she does not deny the identity of her people again: "Accepting no title of honor before her name, but allowing a small caress after it, she became an unchurched preacher, one who visited pulpits and opened her great heart to those who could use it. . . . Uncalled, unrobed, unanointed, she let her great heart beat in their presence" (87). As Michaels indicates that Morrison prefers experience to knowledge (141), Baby Suggs's primary goal in preaching is to *experience* the past by "revisiting" it, that is, to culturally and spiritually recuperate the interconnectedness of past and present among her people, an interconnectedness which has been jeopardized by the past or slavery. Promoting healing and growth as well, Baby Suggs's sermon conveys how oppression has ideologically forced her people to refuse identity, to lead to social and spiritual suicide. She assists her people in experiencing and loving others and themselves, and in connecting the forgotten parts of themselves into the African body, in order to attest to the unbroken kinship between the living and the dead by instructing them to "'Cry,' . . . 'For the living and the dead'" (88). Taking in a sense the role of the ancestor (after 1865), Baby Suggs, who is herself already dead at the beginning of the novel, is still a moral model among her people who are living now, serving them the power of history-making.

Rejecting race as an intrinsic category that designates good or evil in spite of the reality that it has been used to construct a hierarchy of dominance, Baby Suggs believes that race is not a biological but a historical entity; her conclusion is, after all, that color itself is "something harmless in this world" (179). Her spirituality, hence, disdains "definitions" and categorization, like the equation of whiteness with goodness and dominance, and blackness with evil and the oppressed. Good and evil, according to her morality, are undefinable, not based on absolute knowledge, but depending on "knowing how much": "Good is knowing when to stop" (87). Not approving of "extra," and regarding the ideological historical pattern of white people's excessive abuse as "bad luck," she concludes "the lesson she had learned from her sixty years a slave and ten years free" by announcing that "there was no bad luck in the world but whitepeople" because they "don't know when to stop" and thus had tired her out at last (104). It is the unnamed "schoolteacher," Sethe's former enslaver, who most typically represents what Baby Suggs calls the moral absolute of evil, "bad luck," in *Beloved*.

The schoolteacher is undeniably an embodiment of "extra," the white people who, in the spirituality of Baby Suggs, lack human limitations or morality, as shown repeatedly in the destruction of the slaves in the text, including Sethe's murder of her baby.[8] The schoolteacher's undertaking to reenslave Sethe and the four grandchildren culminates in and "reproduces" a lifetime of abuses by

the white people, overshadowing the creative agency Baby Suggs attempts to enact. When the schoolteacher says to the nephew, "'I told you to put her human characteristics on the left; her animal ones on the right. And don't forget to line them up" (193), his discourse constructs Sethe as the racial Other, the uncivilized, violent primitive, bringing back abuses of power through this racial oppression, in opposition to Baby Suggs's contestation of race, class, and gender-based restrictions on the exercise of creative or righteous agency. Baby Suggs senses about the white men: "The righteous Look every Negro learned to recognize along with his ma'am's tit. Like a flag hoisted, this righteousness telegraphed and announced the faggot, the whip, the fist, the lie, long before it went public" (157). Similarly, the schoolteacher's abusive discourse brings to mind bell hooks's description of representations of whiteness as terrorizing in the black imagination since his discourse exposes the history of the views of African American people[9]; that is, it clearly indicates that class struggle (in ideology) causes the reproduction of the ideology of the dominant ruling class, which is not abolished in the literary text.

Moreover, in contrast to Baby Suggs's moral engagement of the heart and imagination, the schoolteacher's methods are apparently scientific and linguistically objective, with his notebooks and neat lines proving his "definitions" as facts, which are products of racial categorization. Symbolically, when Sixo talks his way out of charges of theft—"Sixo take and feed the soil, give you more crop. Sixo take and feed Sixo give you more work"—the schoolteacher beats him to show him "that definitions belonged to the definers—not the defined" (190). The power of white definers defines the Other as less than human. With his social or (white) cultural authority, the schoolteacher's "definitions" and the logical clarity are tools in a system of power relations; they give his words the power of "truth," which makes a contrast with the power of Baby Suggs's spiritual words.

Through "experiencing" history and the past, Morrison, in this way, examines in *Beloved* the white supremacist ideology and essentialist repertoires that have defined the equation of white/black with subject/subjected, and African Americans as the racial Other, showing how the ideological notion of race as an intrinsic, biological category was prevalent in the time of slavery in the early nineteenth century. In order to retrieve the "property" of her own people so that they themselves are no longer "property that reproduced itself without cost" (228), Morrison's central achievement in *Beloved* is identification of the alternative to ideological illusion; this alternative is "interconnectedness" with "history" by describing a experiential process of history and "appealing to history." As a "historicist" in Michaels's sense, Morrison ultimately and successfully explains how people—especially African American people—have come to be who they are in the terms of the history of slavery.

III

Mary Helen Washington says, "Whether Zora Neale Hurston was black as coal, light yellow, or light brown seems to have depended a great deal on the imagination and mind set of the observ-

er"(7). Washington's view brings to mind Althusser's concept of ideology, namely, the representation of imaginary versions of the real social relations in existence, that would be necessary for the perpetuation of the capitalist system. As Morrison in particular recognizes in her implication of Melville, she believes that ideology is illusion/allusion, which apparently is synonymous with Althusserean "imagination." Both Hurston and Morrison are prominent African American woman writers, but what makes their writings different is the way they describe through ideology or imagination their relation to the real world, in which they live and write.

Born in the little black town of Eatonville, Florida, an exclusively colored town, Zora Neale Hurston reached her thirteenth year without an awareness of the racial oppression experienced by nearly every other southern child of her generation: she says, "I remember the very day that I became colored" ("How It Feels" 152). Her childhood, a life relatively free of white racial prejudice for those thirteen years, and her credibility with white people, who helped her for money, had (ideological) effects on "the real world" around her and her writings as well. In a sense, caught in the ideological structure, in other words, accepting the status quo as such, Hurston believed that her people recognized what they were and behaved accordingly. In the all-black Eatonville society of *Their Eyes*, the relation between "subjects" and "Subject" is mutually recognized in this illusion, where class/gender ideology largely works as shown in the men's authoritative power structure in the novel, where there are the submission to the dominant ideology and the submission of the very ideology of the dominated classes. It is actually said that during her early writing period, Hurston herself cleverly compromised her own dignity in order to find people to give her money to further her career; she had "a talent which sparked the accusation that she pumped whites for money" (Washignton 10). Her particular mode of relation to the dominant ideology, to the mechanistic capitalistic ideology which supports the class distinctions of bourgeois capitalism, is then juxtaposed with the conflicting ideological position of organic community that is representative of the non-mechanistic, non-technological vision of social order that Hurston really advantages. Hurston, synthesizing the two principles in the text, endorses the proliferation of the organic tropes of the African mode in connection with the protagonist's passionate love, while perceiving the capitalistic social system as oppressive and unbalanced. She, more or less, acknowledges the assault to which the cultural/spiritual tradition of African American people has been subjected and consciously but not overtly struggles in a disempowered position. What Hurston is most interested in is, then, to illustrate her racial pride in the text, not conflict, different from Morrison in this point. Hurston says, "I AM NOT tragically colored. There is no great sorrow dammed up in my soul, nor lurking behind my eyes. . . . I do not belong to the sobbing school of Negrohood who hold that nature somehow has given them a lowdown dirty deal and whose feelings are all hurt about it" ("How It Feels" 153). Hurston's view here is evident when Janie in *Their Eyes* in the end returns ironically to the "whitest" place of oppression, the "White House," because she now knows her own African-American self and can think *not* in white terms. Key to Hurston's perspective are African cultural/spiritual elements, and the "ancient power" is for Hurston the necessary point of

departure for African-American women writers: Hurston appreciates and celebrates, rather than opposes, racial difference. *Their Eyes* is, therefore, hardly a protest novel in the manner of other contemporary black writers at the time when critical spirit — the new ideology — was just rising in the South; instead, it celebrates the richness of the black folk experience.

In contrast to Hurston, who wants to commit to class rather than race, and hence depict African Americans as something other than victims of white American society, independent of racial conflict, Toni Morrison commits more to race in *Beloved*. Being undeniably a postmodernist author as well, she has in a way neglected class difference in her attention to racial, cultural, and sexual difference, like other postmodernist authors, because class difference, as Michaels observes, has always seemed "an implausible candidate for promotion to the status of a subject position that we must respect" (180). The model of oppression of her people is one of marginalization, where the problem is not one of poverty and economic inequality, but of the more racial/cultural "subject" problem articulated through its relation to an oppressive norm. As a historicist here, appealing to history is her way of identifying ideology with "illusion," and of exposing through racial values the effects of the domination that are realized in this literary production, the presence of the dominated ideology within the dominant ideology itself. What Morrison underwrites is the insistence on what Michaels calls "all the nonideological differences . . . those differences that have nothing to do with differences in belief" (16). In an attempt to overcome whiteness as ideology/illusion, Morrison in *Beloved* succeeds in identifying the alternative to the illusion as what is called "history," by *experiencing* the past with the incarnated child figure of Beloved. With racial memory as the means of defining both individual and national identity, Morrison explores a process of shaping "history" in which African American people will not be marginalized and victimized anymore by oppressive definitions of "the subject," at the same time inspiring their spiritual and sociopolitical selves as Baby Suggs does in *Beloved*. As, from the point of view of Marxism, capitalism is understood to need the poor as subject, so Morrison needs her race — African American people — in her text: as the end of capitalism in Marxist perspective is supposed to be the end of poverty, so she anticipates the end of the difference in race that has been used to construct a hierarchy of dominance — that is, the ideological/illusional difference, the imaginary distortion inherent in ideological representation of the real world. Casting racial memory as rememory, Morrison, in her text, represents "racial" as ultimately human or of the human race, requiring the redescription of differences between humans and having the effects of establishing "human" as an internally undifferentiated category that unites all. Without the illusion of ideology, "conflict" would not exist between subjects and Subject — which is the initial aim of Marxism.

NOTE

1) According to Klaus Benesch, "the comparable condition of mules and slaves — both are considered workhorses and, more often than not, treated in similar ways — made the mule a favorite symbol of Afro-American folklore, a prominent object of identification for many black people, even long after

Emancipation" (632–33).

2) S. Jay Walker also argues that Hurston "betrays Janie's gradual resistance to traditional role stereotypes by confining her for a third time to the traditional pattern of the male-female relationsip" (qtd. in Benesch 634).

3) On this point, Silko's Marxist is like Hurston's because, according to Michaels, it "keeps on insisting on the primitiveness of 'tribalism' and on the primacy of the class struggle"; but it is unlike Hurston's "because he 'has no use for indigenous history' and because he 'denies the holocaust of indigenous Americans . . ." (132).

4) It is because, as Michaels argues, "that wrongs done to the slaves are wrongs done to African-Americans today . . . and that wrongs done to the slaves, while they were not done to anyone living now, have nonetheless had effects on people who are living now" (159).

5) One of critics, Marianne Hirsch defines the word as "neither memory nor forgetting, but memory combined with (the threat of) repetitions" (96).

6) According to Michaels, "crimes against history—holocaust denial or revisionism—are the worst crimes of all. They are worse than capitalist exploitation because the capitalist steals the worker's labor, not his identity. And in a way, they are even worse than the holocausts themselves, because where the holocausts destroy life, at least they acknowledge identity—indeed, they are a tribute to it. But indifference to or denial of the holocausts refuses identity" (132).

7) According to Judylyn S. Ryan, spirituality is "recognizably African/Black"; and as important sustaining functions, the elements of traditional African religions include "belief in God, belief in divinities and other spirits, belief in the sustaining presence of ancestors, and the practice of magic—that is the 'attempt on the part of man to tap and control the supernatural resources of the universe for his own benefit,' situated within a nonlinear concept of time" (269).

8) Linda Krumholz mentions the destructions of other slaves, as seen in the story of Halle's going mad and Paul D's memories of Mister and the bit, and states that "all demonstrate the connection to the white slaveholding society's immorality, its lack of human limitations on its actions, that reciprocates in the minds of its victims as too much suffering to be endured" (85).

9) Regarding this, Stamp Paid's reflection on race prominently reveals how both whites and blacks have seen each other: "Whitepeople believed that whatever the manners, under every dark skin was a jungle. Swift unnavigable waters, swinging screaming baboons, sleeping snakes, red gums ready for their sweet white blood. In a way, he thought, they were right. The more coloredpeople spent their strength trying to convince them how gentle they were, how clever and loving, how human, the more they used themselves up to persuade whites of something Negroes believed could not be questioned, the deeper and more tangled the jungle grew inside. But it wasn't the jungle blacks brought with them to this place from the other (livable) place. It was the jungle whitefolks planted in them. And it grew. It spread. In, through and after life, it spread, until it invaded the whites who had made it. Touched them every one" (198–99).

Works Cited

Althusser, Louis. *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. 1971. New York: Monthly Review Press, 2001.

Angelo, Bonnie. "The Pain of Being Black: An Interview with Toni Morrison." *Conversation with Toni Morrison*. Ed. Danille Taylor-Guthrie. Jackson: UP of Mississippi, 1994. 255–61.

Awkward, Michael. *Inspiriting Influences: Tradition, Revision, and Afro-American Women's Novels*. New York: Colombia UP, 1989.

Balibar, Etienne, and Pierre Macherey. "Literature as an Ideological Form: Some Marxist Propositions."

Oxford Literary Review 3 (1978): 4–12.

Benesch, Klaus. "Oral Narrative and Literary Text: Afro-American Folklore in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*." *Callaloo: A Journal of African American and African Arts and Letters* 11:3 (1988): 627–35.

Bouson, J. Brooks. *Quiet As It's Kept: Shame, Trauma, and Race in the Novels of Toni Morrison*. New York: State U of New York P, 2000.

Collins, Patricia H. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Gates, Jr., Henry Louis. *The Signifying Monkey: A Theory of African-American Literary Criticism*. New York: Oxford UP, 1988.

Hirsch, Marianne. "Maternity and Rememory: Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *Representations of Motherhood*. Ed. Donna Bassin, Margaret Honey, and Meryle Mahrer Kaplan. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994, 92–110.

Homans, Margaret. "Feminist Fictions and Feminist Theories of Narrative." *Narrative* 2.1 (January 1994): 3–16.

Hurston, Zora Neale. "How It Feels to Be Colored Me." *I Love Myself: When I Am Laughing . . . And Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive*. Ed. Alice Walker. New York: Feminist Press, 1979. 152–55.

---. *Their Eyes Were Watching God*. 1937. New York: Harper Collins Publishers. 1999.

Krumholz, Linda. "The Ghosts of Slavery: Historical Recovery in Toni Morrison's *Beloved*." *Toni Morrison's Beloved*. Ed. Horold Bloom. Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1999. 79–95.

Marks, Donald R. "Sex, Violence, and Organic Consciousness in Zora Neale Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God*." *Black American Literature Forum* 19 (1985): 152–57.

Michaels, Walther Benn. *The Shape of the Signifier: 1967 to the End of History*. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2004.

Mobley, Marilyn S. "A Different Remembering: Memory, History, and Meaning in *Beloved*." *Toni Morrison Critical Perspectives Past and Present*. Ed. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., and K. A. Appiah. New York; Amistad, 1993. 356–65.

Morrison, Toni. *Beloved*. 1987. London: Picador, 1988.

---. "The Site of Memory." *Inventing the Truth: The Art and Craft of Memoir*. Ed. William Zinsser. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1998. 183–200.

---. "Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature." *Toni Morrison*. Ed. Harold Bloom. New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1990. 201–30.

Rody, Caroline. "Toni Morrison's *Beloved*: History, 'Rememory,' and a 'Clamor for a Kiss.'" *American Literary History* 7.1 (1995): 92–119.

Ryan, Judylyn S. "Spirituality and/as Ideology in Black Women's Literature: The Preaching of Maria W. Stewart and Baby Suggs, Holy." *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity*. Ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker. Berkeley: U of California P., 1998. 267–87.

Simmons, Ryan. "'The Hierarchy Itself': Hurston's *Their Eyes Were Watching God* and the Sacrifice of Narrative Authority." *African American Review* 36.2 (Summer 2002): 181–93.

Washington, Mary Helen. Introduction. "Zora Neale Hurston: A Woman Half in Shadow." *I Love Myself: When I Am Laughing . . . And Then Again When I Am Looking Mean and Impressive*. Ed. Alice Walker. New York: Feminist Press, 1979. 7–25.

Wolter, Jürgen C. “From History to Communal Narrative: The Merging of Cultural Paradigms in *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.” *American Studies* 46.2 (2001): 233–48.